Bob and Mary Moore

Saturday, October 14th, 2017 [day after FERC approved Mountain Valley Pipeline] headlines read: “It’s just a win-win for everybody.” I BEG TO DIFFER!

So I would like to take this time to briefly describe how it is going to affect our parents, Bob and Mary Moore, and our lives. What this does to our future is not about money, but about an end to a family’s dreams and plans for the future. It is unbelievable that it is legal for a corporation to override human rights for something that is not crucial and for corporate gain. I have fibromyalgia, and have physically ill since the news broke on Friday, the 13th of October, that the pipeline is going through. Even though we don’t own the farm it is going through, I have lived here for 44 years, since my parents moved here. When my husband and I married, 38 years ago we started our lives here, built our home on a lot adjoining our parent’s farm and planned to live here the rest of our lives.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline proposes to put a 42” pipeline within 150’ of the edge of Bob and Mary Moore’s home on their 20 acre farm. They are 85 and 91 years old respectively. We do not understand how this can possibly be legal, since we have been told that you cannot build within 600’ of the pipeline once it goes through. At this time in their lives, I’m not sure that they could live through moving. We have requested that the pipeline be moved further down on the property so that it would be less invasive to their lives, and we have been advised that the Atlantic Coast pipeline was too far along in the process to make this change. Please note that originally, the pipeline was scheduled to go through the middle of the farm, but the route was changed.

My father purchased this farm 45 years ago, cleared the property of old buildings, brush, trees, and built a home. This farm also won him an award of “Farmer of the Year” in West Virginia. He has spent the remaining years making it into his small piece of heaven. He retired at the age of 55 to farm. His greatest pleasures are trail riding his horse, and working on the farm.

Both of our parents are remarkable for their age. Dad has had heart surgery, bladder cancer, and suffered from a stroke along with several mini strokes. His wife, Mary, has osteoarthritis, and does not leave home very often, but she does manage to keep their home spotless, fix their meals, do their laundry, and be outside in their yard. But as she says, “she works awhile and rests awhile. “ After Dad’s major stroke, the doctors told us to let him do whatever he feels like he can do. So he takes care of the farm, their lawn, his horse and plans for the next trail ride. At their age, each year is precious. Their wealth is in their home and farm. Even if they could afford to move, it would not be possible physically or mentally possible at their age to start over. His neurologist and cardiac doctor’s both believe that his lifestyle is what keeps him going.

While my husband and I do not have a financial investment in the farm, we have an emotional investment here. We built our home here, raised our sons, built our barn on the farm, and shared the farm shared the farm with him to keep our horses. While our home is nothing fancy, and my husband built it himself, we have invested more than it would appraise for—but this was never a concern, because we planned to live here the rest of our lives. Because of my professional experience and education, I have been offered jobs all over the United States for more money than I could dream of making in West Virginia. But this was never a consideration because we wanted to be close to our parents and we shared the love of horses and trail riding with Dad. Several years ago, we purchased an acre of property in front of our home for twice its value, and tore down the house, and it was our oldest son’s plan to build a home on it. Our son is in the process of closing on a piece of property elsewhere because he does not want to live this close to the pipeline. I am terrified of living this close to the pipeline and cannot imagine living here anymore, so we are in the process of selling our residential rental property and making arrangements to move from here. Financially, we won’t be able to buy a farm, so I will not be able to keep our horses. “Being my father’s daughter” is devastating for me since I have ridden horses for over 55 years.

People tell us that it won’t be that big of a disturbance to our lives, but we know better. When the sewer line went through our property along with my father’s farm (far away from his home) we experienced first-hand what it was like for your property to be taken over by eminent domain. This is another long story. But putting it simply, it was a nightmare. Shortly after this invasion, my father had a major stroke. While I cannot provide medical proof, I witnessed the daily stress and agony he went through and can only imagine how this pipeline is going to affect him.